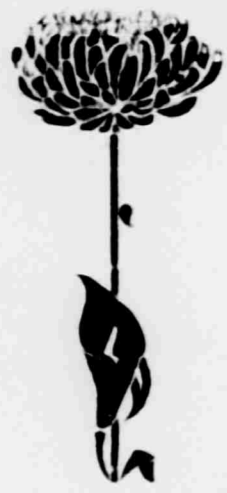


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with the state department, investigated the French concessions and found them valid, and a provisional agreement was entered into with the owners for the payment of \$40,000,000 for the work already done on the isthmus. There has been some perplexing delay in negotiating a treaty with the government of Colombia for a permanent right of way, but this seems likely now to be speedily adjusted. Apparently actual work will be begun early in 1903 on this great enterprise, which the American people have long demanded as a necessity for our national development and well being.

Work was begun on an American cable under the Pacific ocean from San Francisco to our possessions in the orient. The cable was landed at the Golden Gate but a short time ago and was carried by the cable ship Silver-town to Honolulu, thus placing us in telegraphic communication with our mid-Pacific Islands. From thence it is carried on to Guam and then to Manila, with which place we shall in a few months be in quick communication by submarine wire.

During 1902 there were laid 4,000 miles of new railroad track in this country, bringing our total railway mileage up to 200,000. An item of interest was the voluntary advance of 10 per cent in the wages of railroad employees on all the principal lines, though there was also a considerable advance in freight rates.

An industrial development of prime importance was the authorization by congress and the beginning of preliminary work by the United States geological survey of a system of irrigation which will ultimately make fertile millions of acres of arid and waste land of the public domain in the west and southwest, bringing under cultivation an area capable of supporting a vast population.

In this connection, turning for the moment from our own country to the old world, unquestionably the greatest industrial accomplishment as well as the greatest engineering feat of the year was building of the Assouan dam across the Nile at a cost of \$100,000,000, which will irrigate and fructify nearly 2,000,000 acres of hitherto partially unproductive land in Egypt.

Beyond question the greatest achievement in applied science during the year has been the practical perfection of the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy. A year ago Signor Marconi had succeeded in sending across the Atlantic without the aid of transmitting wire signal messages in single characters, which was then regarded as a wonderful feat. During the year experiments were carried on until now the inventor has been able to send from Glace Bay, Cape Breton, to Cornwall, England, intelligible messages of a combination of characters or words, which would seem to assure beyond peradventure the success and practicability of wireless telegraphy.

## Labor Disputes and Arbitration.

Unquestionably the most important industrial development of 1902 was the miners' strike in the anthracite coal regions of Pennsylvania, involving 150,000 men, which began on May 15, effectually tying up the mines until Oct. 20, when an intolerable situation, affecting nearly every branch of the nation's activities and threatening a fuel famine in the great centers of population, was relieved by the action of the president of the United States in the appointment of a commission to whom the parties in the dispute agreed to submit the questions involved.

Whatever may be the findings of the arbitration commission, still sitting the questions involved, it is generally recognized that organized labor won a substantial victory, in view of the fact that the operators were brought to accept almost identically the same proposition for amicable adjustment which they declined in the beginning to entertain.

Some progress was made during the year in the line of peaceful settlement of the differences between the employer and the employed. This was illustrated in the meeting in New York a few weeks ago of the industrial department of the National Civic federation, where the representatives of capital and labor met in dispassionate and friendly though earnest and partisan discussion of their rights and relations. Though the era of industrial peace has not yet arrived, we were perhaps brought somewhat nearer to it in 1902 than ever before, even if within that period there occurred the most stubbornly fought industrial battle in recent years.

## Pan-American Developments.

During 1902 our relations with the republics of this hemisphere, over whose destinies we have assumed by the promulgation and maintenance of the Monroe doctrine to extend theegis of our protection against European aggression, have been of exceptional interest and significance.

As a result of our intervention in Cuba and the war with Spain we became sponsor at the birth of a new nation in the Antilles. The republic of Cuba as a sovereign and independent state came into being early in the year 1902, the first congress meeting on the 7th of May last and the first president being inaugurated on the 20th of the

same month. While perhaps we might have done something more than we have yet done to hold up the hands of the struggling little republic for whose existence we were largely responsible, the Cubans have made commendable progress in settling the problems of self government. A hopeful sign is in the attention given to public instruction, fully 20 per cent of the national budget for the first year being for educational purposes, mainly in the establishment of primary schools.

Revolutions of more or less serious character have been in progress during the year in Venezuela, Colombia and Haiti. In Colombia it was necessary for us to intervene by the landing of marines for the protection of commerce at the isthmus, which this country is pledged to do under treaty stipulation. The effect of this action was salutary, and the revolution was practically ended by the surrender of General Uribe Uribe, the leader of the revolutionists.

Within the year the long standing boundary dispute between Chile and the Argentine Republic, which had more than once threatened to precipitate these republics into war, was settled by arbitration.

The most serious political development on this hemisphere during the year was the joint effort of Germany and Great Britain to collect by force claims of their citizens against the republic of Venezuela and the bombardment of the fortifications and the sinking of the ships of the latter country. There was for awhile a prospect that this country might be drawn into the controversy. The attitude assumed at Washington was that while the Monroe doctrine could not be used by any South or Central American government to shelter itself from the payment of just obligations European territorial aggression would not be permitted, and there is now fair prospect that an adjustment of the European claims will be effected through the good offices of the United States without further resort to hostile demonstration.

## International Relations.

In the comity of nations and the advancement of peace on earth the most significant event of the year 1902 was doubtless the settling in motion of the machinery of the international court of arbitration, which was an outcome of the peace congress of The Hague. The United States had the distinction of having the first case before that court. This was what was known as the pious fund case, involving claims of citizens of the United States against Mexico. An award in favor of the United States for \$1,500,000 was given by the high court, which was gracefully accepted by the Mexicans.

Another case which we had before this court and which was settled in our favor was the claim of American seal fishers against Russia for unlawful seizures in the Bering sea eleven years ago. The amount involved was only about \$100,000, but the decision settled important questions of sovereignty and sealing rights in hitherto disputed marine territory.

Still another case of arbitration in which this country was involved was the Samoan dispute over German claims for indemnity growing out of the landing of American and British marines at Apia some years ago. The arbitrator was King Oscar of Sweden, and the verdict was against the contention of the United States and Great Britain, though the amount involved was comparatively insignificant and the opinion rendered was not regarded as forming a precedent for the future action of this country.

With the exception of the indemnity claim of Miss Ellen Stone against Bulgaria and the remote possibility of being drawn into conflict with Germany and Great Britain over the Venezuelan affair, the relations of the United States, diplomatic and otherwise, are friendly. This friendliness has been enhanced by the visit to this country during the year of Prince Henry of Prussia, Grand Duke Boris of Russia, the crown prince of Siam, Sir Charles Beresford of the British admiralty and particularly by the coming of distinguished Frenchmen for the unveiling of the Rochambeau monument at Washington in recognition of the aid given us in the struggle for national independence. International comity was further strengthened by the sending of a special embassy to the coronation of King Edward of England and the visit of Generals Curbin, Young and Wood to Europe.

An event of special gratification to the civilized world was the ending of the Boer war in May last after nearly three years of armed conflict, the most persistent and costly in blood and treasure in recent history. With the re-establishment of peace in South Africa the world is without war of any considerable proportions for the first time in many years. There are, of course, disorders in various parts of the world, such, for instance, as the uprising of the Mad Mullah against British rule in Somaliland, our own difficulties in the Philippines, the oppression and denationalization of the Finns by Russia, and the situation in Venezuela, but these may not yet be regarded as attaining the proportions of actual war. For the moment at least the passing of 1902 and the birth of 1903 see the world practically at peace.

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